

# SELECTED POEMS

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Author of "A Goan Fiddler," etc

1942

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## PREFATORY NOTE

Of these 125 Selected Poems the earliest ("The Italian Architect") was written in 1903 and the latest ("Kismat") in 1939. The ten poems shown with an asterisk in the Table of Contents are published for the first time now

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DE PROFUNDIS





## SELECTED POEMS

### THE PICTURE

BEFORE my life there hung a picture,  
 And it was all my heart desired:  
 The fields so garden-like they spread,  
 Each hill it raised its dreamy head  
 And dreamy thoughts inspired.

And on one hill was seen a cross,  
 And there, with arms about it, lay  
 A ragged child, and, hovering near,  
 A misty form, that yet seemed clear  
 To call the child away

But, lo, one night a storm arose  
 And I awoke with nameless fears  
 The fields and hills how changed they were!  
 The misty form no more was there,  
 The child lay pierced with spears!

### VIA SACRA

WHEN knaves and fools had once conspired  
 To load me with disgrace,  
 And some old women wept aloud  
 At seeing my blood stained face,

A voice across the buried years  
 Cried out in accents deep  
 "Ye daughters of Jerusalem,  
 Weep not o'er me, but weep

For yourselves and for your children!"  
And right before me stood  
The churchyard with each cross, the folk,  
And the choir-master good

At Via Sacra thus the good  
Choir-master cried had he  
And touched the heart of everyone—  
Of everyone but me

Nay, I had mocked him, I alone  
Of all the reverent throng,  
And, doubtless, 'n this wise at last  
Had Time avenged the wrong.

### THE FLIGHT

LIKE a thief I slunk away  
"Are you leaving us?"  
Asked the palm-trees, bending low.  
"Never, never thus!"  
Cried the birds, "we too shall go"—  
And they followed me  
I heeded not but hung my head  
My heart was dead in me,  
The world I loved was dead,  
The rest was naught to me—  
And like a thief I fled

On my way I sold the house  
I had cherished well.  
"Judas! Judas!" croaked the crows,  
'Sure to burn in hell!"

From his rave my father rose—  
 Rose and followed me  
 I smote my breast, my dead heart bled  
 And made the mark on me  
 Strange worlds before me spread,  
 My world was lost to me—  
 And Judas-like I fled.

### SAY NO MORE

"ON this bench you sat together,  
 Always smiling to each other"—  
 Cruel memory, say no more  
 "Here's the courtyard where you gambolled,  
 There the hillock where you rambled!"—  
 Cruel memory, say no more  
 "There the cross and cashew-tree"—  
 Say no more, O say no more—  
 Would the earth were over me!

### FAREWELL

FA W LL! but not as men might take it  
 For you and I are one,  
 As much as flesh and blood can make it,  
 And naught beneath the sun,  
 Till all my sands have run,  
 Dear hamlet mine, us two shall sever—  
 For ever we are one, for ever!

## ACROSS THE GHATS

Great hills and great hills, you say,

On every side they rise?

One little mill 'tis all I see

O friend, cover mine eyes

And houses scattered far and wide

On every hill, you say?

One little house 'tis all I see

Now close mine eyes, I pray

And up and down the folk they go?

One man alone I see—

A ghostlike man who digs a grave

Good friend, now bury me.

## THE FERRY

There stood only one hut

And a temple all hoary,

But the ricefields around

They shone in their glory,

The ferryman free

In his boat at the ferry

(A merry man he)

Was humming all merry

The ferryman's wife

Was the threshold adorning

And singing as sweet

As a dhyal in the morning.

And the ferryman's child  
Came down o the jetty  
Crying, "Baksheesh, saib, bakshesh!"  
And the child was so pretty.

But soon crossing the stream,  
I wayworn and weary,  
It all passed like a dream—  
O the corner so cheery!

### THE HYMN

AS we three left the village  
We heard some children sing  
A hymn to Virgin Mary  
And the small church-bell ring  
"For pity stay a while,"  
My heart said with a smile,  
But Fate she would not stay,  
And dragged us both away

Praise be to Virgin Mary!  
Across the hills and seas  
The hymn it followed us,  
And now, on every breeze,  
My heart and I can hear  
Its cadence just as clear  
We turn to Fate and say,  
"Come drag the hymn away!"

## A TILLER OF THE SOIL

How good indeed is toil<sup>1</sup>  
And bread tastes sweetest then,  
But they that till the soil—  
As yonder peasant now—  
Are blest above all men

Such hosts of angels tried  
To see the peasant plough,  
The heavens they opened wide  
And lit the darksome field  
The man was heard to say  
‘Another furrow, son,  
And half our work is done,  
Then you may have your hay  
And I shall have my rice,  
And both can rest a while—  
Come, one more furrow, come ”

It made the angels smile  
To hear an ox called son  
With wonder I was dumb  
And wept full bitterly,  
But wept in vain, in vain,  
They *would* not look on me,  
Naught cared they for my pain.  
To the good peasant then  
I cried, “O blest of men,  
Pray let me hold the plough,  
'Tis sure to do me good,  
Some sweat upon my brow,  
Well after work comes food,  
And work or food to share—

To share it with another—  
 Great joy that be and rare.  
 Do try it, O my brother,  
 And let me hold the plough.”

These words scarce had I said,  
 One instant at my brow  
 Stared he—then shrieked and fled

### 'TIS NOT MANY DAYS

'TIS not many days  
 And no lark in the sky  
 Was blither than I,  
     And to God I gave praise  
 When I saw the corn spring  
 Or heard the birds sing,  
     And I shunned evil ways.

Now my heart is so torn  
 No worm under the sky  
 Is so wretched as I,  
     And I sorrow and moan  
 If I see the corn spring  
 Or hear a bird sing,  
     And I let God alone

### ALL SOULS' DAY

THE bells toll for the dead!  
 The dead lie quiet, they say,  
 As quiet as babes in bed—

Death, take me then away  
A'ye no peace have I,  
If dead all quiet I'll lie



POEMS RELATING TO CHILDHOOD



## TO AN ANGEL

CHILD, when you dropped down from the sky  
 Into mine arms with many a cry,  
     Where was I, my child,  
     Where was I  
 When you dropped down from the sky?  
     Upon a lonesome wild

Child, when I look into your eyes  
 My heart it thrills with glad surprise,  
     What see I, dear child,  
     What see I  
 When I look into your eyes?  
     A garden undefiled

And from that garden these sweet flowers  
 I plucked while there I strolled for hours  
     Take them all, my Sweet,  
     Take them all,  
 From that garden these sweet flowers—  
     I lay them at your feet.

## VENITE, ADOREMUS

BA of Bethlehem,  
 We're children from the Foundling Home  
 Come joyful to adore Thee  
 Gifts have we none, but take our hearts—  
 Our hearts we lay before Thee.

Babe of Bethlehem  
We held a lantern in the dark  
And cried, "Behold the Star!  
Come hasten, hasten as they did—  
The kings who came from far "

Babe of Bethlehem,  
We find Thee, lo, in a poor shed  
(They found us on the street),  
Yet art Thou happy, so are we—  
And kiss Thy little feet

#### WHEN I WAS A CHILD

MY world was once within four hills  
And I therein a pet,  
The sun it rose behind one hill,  
Behind another set

The sun, the moon and all the stars  
They sure wêre not so far,  
The sun and moon I talked to them  
And counted every star.

Then all the people they were kind  
And most of childrên good,  
And many a child would come to play  
And some would come for food

'Twas nice to see them come and go,  
But nicer, I must say,  
To see the pig come grunting home  
To mother's *ay! ay! ay!*

The pig it was a pet of mine,  
 Though birds and dogs and cats  
 I liked them much, but know not why  
 I screamed at sight of rats

And there was one I did not like—  
 An ugly drunkard man—  
 And, if I saw him passing by,  
 Into the house I ran,

He dug the graves and rung the bell,  
 And said they, one and all,  
 That none could ring so well as he.  
 At feast or funeral.

But best I liked the beggarmen,  
 I liked to give them rice,  
 In small but many handfuls gave—  
 Then nice I felt, so nice.

And when the feast of flowers came round,  
 That came but once a year,  
 I went with flowers to church, and knelt  
 And prayed with father dear

I knelt and prayed to *Mae de Deus*  
 That I all good might be,  
 Then threw the flowers about Her shrine,  
 And sweet She smiled on me.

Now gone are feasts and gone are flowers  
 And this the greater pain  
 Whate'er I be I ne'er can be  
 That happy child again.

## A CRADLE SONG

PLEAS teach me, mother dear,  
 A pretty cradle song,  
 And short and sweet, not long;  
 But with a neat neat rhyme  
 And with a sweet sweet chime,  
 To sing in the ear ear ear  
 Of baby dear dear dear—  
 To sing it all the time  
 And make him go to sleep

O look now, mother dear,  
 How baby in glad surprise  
 He opens wide his eyes  
 To hear the song I make  
 For sweet sweet baby's sake,  
 To sing in the ear ear ear  
 Of baby dear dear dear—  
 To sing it when awake  
 And make him go to sleep.

O hear now, mother dear,  
 What baby has to say—  
 He wants to fly away,  
 He's quite as big as I,  
 Says he, and means to fly  
 On these his wee wee feet  
 And hands so sweet sweet sweet.—  
 Now where does baby cry?  
 Dear baby's fast asleep.

## DREAMS IN CHILDHOOD

DEAR mother, now in heaven,  
 A dreamy child had thought me,  
 But then my happy childhood  
 Such happy dreams had brought me

If e'er she woke too early,  
 When birds to song are given,  
 I murmured, "Do not wake me,  
 I hear the birds in heaven "

## UNDER THE MANGO-TREE

YOU are so tall,  
 O mango-tree!  
 We are so small,  
 O mango-tree!  
 Your man oes all  
 Red ripe we see—  
 Do let them fall,  
 Dear mango-tree!

Come, winds, come blow!  
 This mango-tree  
 Won't pity show  
 Though hungry we.  
 Blow, winds, and throw  
 The fruit we see,  
 Blow, dear winds, blow!—  
 There!—one, two, three!

## THE BULBULS' NEST

THE path of life 'tis full of thorns—  
So hard a fate, is ours,  
Yet, say, the first few feet is not  
The path strewn all with flowers,  
Strewn all with flowers?

And naught that comes in after days  
The memory of the joy  
We had of each and every flower,  
Indeed, can e'er destroy,  
Can e'er destroy

And one such flower, among the rest,  
When, past a summer shower,  
A cool breeze blows, remember I  
Each day at luncheon hour,  
At luncheon hour

In a *balcao* there sits a man,  
A boy upon his knee  
They watch two bulbuls nestin gay  
Upon a mango-tree,  
A mango-tree.

It stands so small—the mango tree—  
And to the house so near,  
The birds, when hatched, will sure be theirs,  
The birds they love so dear,  
They love so dear

The boy he laughs or weeps for joy,  
And sire and son begin



To make a cage, a pretty cage,  
 To keep the birdies in,  
 The birdies in

The picture mi ht to *some* seem dull,  
 Not so seems it to *me*,  
 And what a world would I not give  
 Again that child to be,  
 That child to be!

## TWO BABIES

C T NT within a crib it lay,  
 A child wrapt all in silk and wool,  
 And, "Who are you?" it seemed to say:  
 Dear e, it was so beautiful  
 I almost feared to touch it

Anon I saw another child,  
 Tumbling all naked in the street;  
 Surprised, it looked at me and smiled:  
 Dear heart, it smiled so sweet, so sweet,  
 I almost knelt to kiss it

*And then I mused and made this rhyme  
 That men might read it for all time*

## A CHILD OF OUR LADY OF THE MOUNT

NO day in all the livelong year  
 To little ones is half so dear  
 As is, blest Lady, Thine,

So happy they to gather flowers  
 And lay them at Thy shrine

The Lord be praised the Lord He gave  
 A blessed day like this,  
 Would I too were a little child  
 To share their simple bliss!

No child is yet content unless  
 Above its tray of flowers,  
 However fresh and fair they be,  
 A water lily towers

But who will bring that flower to thee,  
 An orphan as thou art,  
 Who prayest in vain thy mother dear  
 To let thee now depart?

In life her only solace thou,  
 She dares not let thee go,  
 Since haunted is the lake, dear child,  
 In which the lilies blow

But, "Mother, mother, go I will,"  
 All wilfully she cried,  
 And kissed her once, and kissed her twice,  
 And slipped off from her side

Then light as fawn the maiden sped  
 Along the pathway hilly,  
 Gay singing all the way that she  
 Would bring the fairest lily

The little birds about the lake

That piped but now in bush and brake—  
 Poor things!—in silent awe  
 And eyes wide open put out their heads  
 When there the child they saw

And farther on and farther yet,  
 Each time she stretched her hand,  
 The one fair lily flowering there  
 It drifted from the land,

While deeper grew the water round  
 And round her, tryin in vain  
 To reach the flower—and ne'er, O ne'er  
 Saw we the child again

### MY GRANNY

YOU home it lay beyond the hills,  
 Yet once or twice a year,  
 You came and stayed with us for days—  
 What grand days, granny dear!

“What want you, boy?—dear granny’s poor,  
 Has brought you nōthing, boy,”  
 You always said but always brought  
 Gram, plantains and a toy.

And then my jolly days begun  
 And th’imp of mischief woke  
 When yells rose round the well as one  
 I broke the pots I broke!

And, going home, the broken pots,  
 I found, had gone before,  
 And you, as broken ni h as they,  
 Awaitin at the door

You first rebuked me, said no boy  
 Was so uncommon wild,  
 Then roused yourself to brave the storm  
 And shield your dear grandchild

"My boy you shall not touch!" you cried,  
 And kept me safe behind,  
 "Boys *will* be boys, why all this noise?"—  
 Mind now, O dau hter, mind!"

I've done with pots, I've done with play,  
 And done with playmates too,  
 They thought me heartless—God He knows  
 With tears I think of *you*

### THE GOAN FIDDLER

C , dear little children,  
 Come and list to me,  
 List to the poor old fiddler  
 Fro the stran e countree.

Baba riding the donkey,  
 Little baby with ayah,  
 Come, I'll play little monkey  
 Or the great Ali Baba.

Tell me first, little baby—  
 Tell and have no fear—  
 Love you ayah or mummy?  
 Ayah!—quite right, my dear.

Now then read me this riddle——  
 “I shall riddle you first,  
 You and your cracked fiddle,  
 Major saib make you burst

“None so grand as mummy—  
 See her dressed for a ball!  
 Isn't she, baby darlin' ?  
 Answers not at all.

“She's bewitched, like the children  
 Of old Hamelin town,  
 And this fiddler's the piper,  
 Now to Poona come down ”—

Smart boy, Master Bobby—!  
 Ayah, whose son, you ken?  
 Major Snobby's?—dear me!  
 Bobby is Snobby then?

Future Lord Command'r-Chief,  
 Bobby—mi hty clear,  
 Tell the mighty Major,  
 Will be lad to hear.

Come now, little children,  
 Hear me play the tune  
 Every man and maiden  
 Sets a-dancin' soon.

## CORSE OF CHILDHOOD

I NOW live in the city  
 But my heart's in the country,  
     In the city I languish,  
 And a wild thorn or tree,  
 If I happen to see,  
     It thrills me with anguish

For the birds, that so often  
 I used to see nesting  
     All gay in the wildwood,  
 Alas, they appear  
 Carrying slow on a bier  
     The corse of my childhood

## DEAD DAYS

ALL serene is daylight breaking,  
 On the hill I hear the herds,  
 Slowly, sadly, I am waking,  
 Waking though to song of birds,  
 And to song of reapers reaping,  
 Since through me now age is creeping—  
 Lord, vouchsafe me grace to see  
 Dead days ere I cease to be!  
     Come, O come, dear days,  
 Come and bring the child with ye,  
 The child with winsome face and smiles:  
 Mind not his childish pranks and freaks  
 (Was ever full of wanton wiles),  
 The child if queer the child was dear  
     And had such rosy cheeks—

O bring child to me  
 All my near ones, all my dear ones,  
 Are waiting here to welcome ye,  
     Come, O come!—  
 Come, dear dead days, and comfort me

In the church are children sinning,  
 Singing hymns to Mother dear,  
 Gaily though the bells are ringing,  
 Sad they sound unto mine ear,  
 Round me night at last is falling  
 And the voice I love is calling,  
 Calling where I long to be—  
 If ye came I could be free  
 Come, O come, dear days,  
 Come and bring the child with ye,  
 Mind not his dirty frock and face,  
 His bleeding hands or bleeding feet  
 (Perchance the child is in disgrace),  
 The child was wild, as many a child,  
     Yet he was ever sweet—

O bring the child to me  
 All my near ones, all my dear ones,  
 Are waiting now to welcome ye,  
     Come, O come!—  
 Come, dear dead days, and set me free.

### THE PRESENTATION

TH E'S the child, dear Mother, near  
 He comes not, lest Thou chide him,  
 He loves Thee all the same,  
 And ladly left off play

And came here all the way  
 Poor boy, and none to guide him,  
 None to shelter, but do Thou  
 A little corner give him  
 A child with gentle ways  
 He will not trouble Thee,  
 And naught will trouble me,  
 Dear Mother, when I leave him

### THE PARTING

LIK a slave obeyed I thee,  
 Like a dog too followed thee,  
 Like a dog its master, O my little master,  
 Cheerful all I followed thee,  
 Now, a child no longer, thou art stepping faster—  
 How am I to follow thee?

Little master, pity me—  
 Stay, O stay a while for me. .  
 No, he's one—mine angel—leaving wings behind  
 Only win s to comfort me, [him,  
 If in search I wander, never shall I find him  
 All the world that was to me.



## NATURE POEMS



## A FIDDLER

A FIDDLER am I of fifty-and-three,  
 I go fiddling up and down  
 Both countryside and town,  
 The town swells they call me *Fiddle-dee-dee*,  
 But the country folk are all kind to me  
 A fiddler am I of fifty-and-three,  
 Yet no clown though somewhat *dou n*.

No children, nor kith nor kin have I,  
 Not even a home of my own—  
 I roam in the world alone,  
 But just let me pass a-fiddling by  
 And the little ones all come dancing nigh  
 No children, nor kith nor kin have I,  
 Yet every child is my own

I take my tunes from the birds on my way  
 And some from the winds that blow—  
 They are all the tunes I know,  
 I hum them o'er as I go and say,  
 These birds, indeed, what a blessing are they!  
 (I take my tunes from the birds on my way)  
 But men they'll never know!

## AT BREAK OF DAY

AT break of day  
 In pleasant spring,  
 When on each spray  
 The blithe birds sin  
 While half awake

In bed you lie  
 And one kiss take  
 Of her close by—  
 How earth and life  
 Seem doubly dear!  
 And with your wife  
 You rise to hear  
 The blithe birds sing,  
 At break of day  
 In pleasant spring,  
 Their matin lay

And if your soul  
 Of pride and greed  
     e uiltless whole,  
 What peace indeed  
 There follows then,  
 What oodwill to  
 Yo r fellow-men  
 Then lows in you!—  
 When blithe birds sin  
 At break of day  
 In pleasant sprin  
 Their matin lay.

Anon you ^hear  
 The lowin herds  
 With bells that cheer  
 No less than birds.  
 How lovely then  
 Appears this earth,  
 And hill and len  
 How full of mirth!  
 What mad deli ht,

What poetic fires  
And visions bright  
The scene inspires!

But soon is heard  
Another sound,  
The voice of bird  
And beast being drowned  
The air is filled  
With humdrum din,  
And life's revealed  
With strife and sin.  
Then painful thoughts  
And tears succeed  
Because our lot's  
So sad indeed,  
And all resolves  
Of gentler kind  
The sun dissolves—  
What though you find  
The valleys ring  
With tinklings gay  
And blithe birds sing  
Their blithest lay.

#### GREETINGS

AT sunrise o'er the hills  
As I go a-whistling gay,  
The birds from many a tree,  
"Good morning, poet!" they say  
It thrills me so, I, I  
Can hardly make reply,

But in my heart I bless them

At sunset I return  
 A-musing all the way,  
 And, to the birds about,  
 "Good night, dear birds!" I say  
 If none of them replies  
 Because of heavy eyes,  
 Sure in their hearts they bless me

### THE CORNFIELD

O autumn morn  
 I chanced to cross  
 A field of corn,  
 And there it was—  
 That blessed morn—  
 To sinful me  
 The grace was given  
 On earth to see  
 The ways of Heaven:  
 I saw a bird  
 And heard a voice  
 I ne'er before  
 Had seen or heard.  
 I did rejoice,  
 Yet with my joy  
 Was holy awe  
 At what I saw,  
 And what I said  
 I know not well,  
 For, strange to tell,  
 I instantly

Was on my knee.

The bird saw too,

Yet did not stir,

And, "Who are you

To ask me, sir?"

It said, and I

Did thus reply,

Grown bolder now,

I know not how:

"An untaught poet

Of trees and birds

Whom no man knoweth

And, wanting words,

But dreams and sings

Of simple thin s."—

"Peace! all heaven knoweth,

From heaven come I:

Come, *simple* poet,"

The bird rejoined

So I drew nigh

And heard it say—

That blessed day—

To an ear of corn,

A tiny ear

Then newly born·

"Grow quick, my dear!

There's dearth and death

On every hand,

In every breath

Upon this land—

Grow quick, my dear!"

Then was revealed  
 At every ear,  
 Throughout the field,  
 A bird, and clear  
 A voice, "Spare, spare!"  
 Was it my prayer  
 That blessed morn  
 While I did cross  
 The field of corn?  
 Perchance it was  
 To sinful me  
 Such grace was given—  
 On earth to see  
 The ways of Heaven

#### SALISBURY PARK

W H N the first time I  
 Crossed Salisbury Park,  
 There was nobody there,  
 But alone in the sky  
 Was sin in a lark  
 We two from the world were apart—  
 The lark in the sky,  
 Upon the earth I—  
 And a strange joy played round my heart.

#### THE FARMER'S WIFE

A S ALL reen hill, an evenfall,  
 And, swayin' on a thorn,  
 A bulbul—to its mate doth call:



Delighted I look on —  
How soft and tranquil all!

Who comes?—A woman young and fair,  
A child against her hip,  
Sweet mo-ras round the knot of hair,  
A tilt upon her lip.—  
How sweet is all the air!

Upon the ground the child she lays  
And plucks the cashews red:  
Some farmer's wife, but the sun's rays  
A glory round her shed —  
Happy must be her days!

#### TO MONSOON BUTT FLIES

WELCOME, pretty butterflies  
Coming gaily through the skies.  
In a distant land I roam,  
You are coming from my home,  
You are coming from the south  
Come now kiss me on the mouth:  
You did kiss my little one  
While he played out in the sun,  
Come then kiss me on the mouth,  
You are coming from the south

Come, my beauties, bring us rain,  
Come and gladden hill and plain.  
He it was had told me all—  
With your coming rain must fall  
Come now kiss me for his sake,

Take a thousand kisses, take  
 Father dear is dead and gone,  
 I am left here all forlorn,  
 Come then kiss me for his sake.  
 Take a thousand kisses, take.

### THE STRAY MONSOON BUTTERFLY

POOR dear butterfly!  
 It has lost its way,  
 Knows not what to do,  
 Lost its poor head too—  
 Just as I too may—  
 Mid these flats and wires

Poor dear butterfly!  
 Gay had left its home,  
 Safe had crossed the sea,  
 Sad its thoughts must be—  
 Worse than wild sea foam  
 Finds the homes of men.

Pretty butterfly,  
 No more fly hither now take,  
 Lest thou break thy wings  
 'Gainst these horrid things,  
 And my heart too break—  
 With thy broken wings.

Pretty butterfly,  
 Glad I'll shelter thee;  
 Come and take thy rest  
 Safe upon my breast,

Come, O come to me  
That so loves thy kind

### TO THE DYAL

THOUGH many a bird of brighter wing  
There be and some that sweeter sing,  
And the birds I love be many,  
Yet I love thee best of any,  
For ne'er was bird to man, I ween,  
What thou, dear bird, to me hast been.

I loved thy son from cradle days  
And oft had tried to sing thy praise  
All my childhood thou didst brighten,  
All my burdens thou dost lighten,  
And this return I make to thee  
Is nau ht beside thy gifts to me.

Each morn and eve, this many a year,  
I've sou ht this place thy sqng to hear  
Though my hopes of fame have fled now  
And my dreams of life be dead now,  
Thank God, one blessing still is mine—  
Thy own dear self—then why repine?

### THE SCORNFUL BIRD

Woe's blessing's love may bring us,  
Ev'n love of beast or bird!  
Ah ne'er should I have known it  
But for a bird I heard.

“The birds what makes you love them  
E’er since a little boy?”

Thus oft my heart had asked me.

“Because they give me joy,”

I as oft had answered promptly,

And now this rich reward

My words are they so childish?—

Pity the child, O Lord!

Day after day I heard it,

Though never once for long,

As soon as I went near it

The bird would cease its song,

Until a voice rebuked me,

Saying, “Wretch, and would you moan?”

This bird the world despises

And sings to God alone”

### THE MUNIAS’ NEST

IN the valley as I rambled,

Sad with thoughts of childhood days,

Thou hast the birds sung loud about me,

How could they my spirits raise?

All they sung was, “Never, never

Will return your childhood days.”

Then I saw a pair of munias—

Happy as birds in paradise—

Make a nest, and sadness left me,

Changing so my heart and eyes

One wild moment I a child was  
And this earth a paradise.

# TO THE TAILOR-BIRD

TWIT! twhit! twhit!  
From tree to tree or bough to bough  
The livelong day  
You fly and sing and fly, as now—  
No bird so gay,  
No bird so gay.

Sweet! sweet! sweet!  
But sweeter, sweeter was your twitter  
In other years,  
Years when I knew not life was bitter,  
And knew not tears,  
And knew not tears

Twit! twhit! twhit!  
Now not a day but you do meet me,  
Your friend of yore,  
And oft you come and oft you greet me,  
The same no more,  
The same no more.

Sweet! sweet! sweet!  
To you so cheery, wee wee deary,  
Life still has zest,  
But I am sated, I am weary,  
And fain would rest,  
And fain would rest.

## BEFORE A CAGE OF BULBULS

IT pains me, bird, to see thee here.  
 All vain is thy despair and rage,  
 No more thy voice the woods will cheer,  
 A voice that made the woods so dear—  
 Confined for life within a cage

My fate is not less hard than thine,  
 Yet much less gallin were the chain—  
 'Mong strangers doomed to toil and pine—  
 And something fain would I resign  
 To see thee range the woods again.

## THE KING-CROW

AGAIN, as years ago,  
 Now every day we meet:  
 You watch me from that tree,  
 I watch you from this seat—  
 Two sorry creatures we!

You're what you ever were,  
 You know none other joy  
 Than chasing harmless birds:  
 Ah, know you not the boy  
 Who chased you mid the herds!

He's off to chase that crow,  
 What will the poor bird do?  
 It caws and caws and flies:  
 'Tis Nature's law, but who  
 Would have it otherwise?

## LOVE POEMS





## THE SECRET

EV'RY year you blossom, tamarind,  
 And the sunbirds seek you as of old,  
 Every day gay children, tamarind,  
 Come to romp around you as of old,  
 And, lo, every hour of every day  
 All these years I've waited, tamarind—  
 Silence! silence to the last, I pray,  
 It was all so fated, tamarind  
 Pride consumes him, said they, tamarind,  
 And no pity had they, tamarind,  
 You the secret keep now, tamarind,  
 Keep it till all secrets are made known,  
 For I go to sleep now, tamarind,  
 Till o'er all the trumpet's blown.

## FIRST LOVE

MA'Y years ago, when life to me  
 Was like a garden fair  
 With flowers that I could pluck at ease  
 All day without a care,

A lassie sweet I loved, and loved  
 With such intensity  
 I thought if she were mine, all mine,  
 How happy I would be!

A lad of hardly eight was I  
 And she no more than seven,  
 With eyes so bright I deemed she was  
 An angel dropped from heaven.

It was at school we met, and mine  
 A pleasant task indeed,  
 For I was bid from out her book  
 To make her spell and read

I made her spell, I made her read,  
 And lingered o'er the task,  
 But, ah, how silly were at times  
 The questions I did ask!

I well remember how I used  
 To pinch her pretty hand  
 A childlike wile of mine that she  
 My love might unders'tand

And I remember how one day,  
 When she begun to cry,  
 I made her sit beside me close  
 And kissed her on the sly.

The tender look she gave me then  
 With joy call I to mind,  
 For it was one that promised love  
 If I to her were kind

And I was kind from that dear day  
 And loved her more and more:  
 But soon we parted—ne'er to meet  
 The same way as before.

So hard a lot was mine it left  
 No day save sabbath day  
 When I my love could see, and then—  
 For distant was the way—

I had to give my sire the plea  
 Of wanting plants and flowers  
 That in their arden grew I went  
 And loitered there for hours.

But then each time, I noticed, she  
 Received me with less joy,  
 For as she grew more lovely so  
 She grew more cold and coy

Her coldness piqued my pride—and I  
 Was proud beyond my age,  
 And one kind word to other boys  
 Raised fits of jealous rage.

And thus I went no more, but soon  
 Forsook my native home  
 For lands across the Ghats, which I  
 For ten long years did roam

Returning thence—though greatly changed—  
 I could not but desire  
 To see for once the maid who could  
 A love so deep inspire.

Not that I wished to wed her now,  
 Such changes time had wrought  
 In me I durst not link my name  
 To one with such a blot,

Since well I knew unhallowed were  
 The riches of her house,  
 Her mother's sister had, besides,  
 Profaned her marriage vows

Yet as her face it haunted me,  
 Had haunted all my days—  
 Ev'n in my wānderin' s wide, when Fame  
 Had spoke so much in praise

Of her sweet charms—no marvel I  
 Should yearn to see the kind  
 Of welcome she would give me now,  
 And from her welcome find

If aught in her betrayed the past.  
 And so I could not wait  
 But went full soon: I met her lone  
 Beside the garden gate.

Gently she placed her hand in mine  
 And raised her tearful eyes  
 I could not help but press her hand—  
 To feel my love arise!

I could not choose but aze and aze  
 Upon her—who so fair?  
 But, though my heart it bade me love,  
 Calm reason cried, "Beware!"

And at that warning rose lar e drops  
 Of sweat upon my brow,  
 And wretched to myself I cried,  
 "Would I were dead ere now!"

Then, from her presence rushin' wild,  
 Straight homeward did I speed  
 elike a an who, forced by fate,  
 Has done a uilty deed.

And—to be brief—we never met  
 Nor dare to meet again,  
 But dear's the memory of first love,  
 Thou h mine had been in vain

### BRAHMIN GIRLS

I've seen the East, I've seen the West,  
 And truth it bids me this declare—  
 Of all the girls the Brahmin girls  
 Are fairest of the fair.  
 The Brahmin girls, the Brahmin girls,  
 The Brahmin girls so fair,  
 Upon their nose the ring of pearls  
 And jasmine in their hair

No more your Lauras, Kates or Jeans,  
 Your eyes of blue and locks of gold,  
 Mohini sweet, a girl as sweet  
 I never shall behold  
 Mohini sweet, Mohini neat,  
 So maddenin' to behold,  
 With *kinning chinning* round her feet  
 And *fas fis* of the fold.

I met a girl at Nāsik fair,  
 A Brahmin girl of beauty rare,  
 She smiled so sweet when I did meet  
 As bade me not despair;  
 But said all rude—confound the prude,  
 She'll drive me to despair—  
 'Ere you I wed I'll shave your head  
 Except a tuft of hair."

# LONG YEARS AGO

I N W a sweet maiden  
 With beautiful eyes,  
     Long years a o,  
 I have seen many eyes  
     ut no pair like hers—  
     They haunt me so!

She lived on the field side  
 In a mean little hut,  
     Long years ago;  
 I lived on the hill side  
 In a clean little house—  
     And hence mine woe

And ne'er the sun rose,  
 And ne'er the sun set,  
     Lon years a o—  
 No matter what weather—  
     ut found us to ether  
     And watched us row.

Two li ht-hearted children  
 With smiles we had parted,  
     Lon years a o,  
 Of partin s and pain,  
 Of life and its trials,  
     What could we know?

I am sittin now lone  
 On the steps we sate on,  
     Long years a o—  
 O to see once a ain

The beautiful eyes  
That haunt me so!

### THE MULLAH'S DAUGHTER

B CAUS the mosque upon the mainland  
Is much too far away,  
The Moslems now have one on th'island,  
And full five times can pray  
A sorry fellow is their mullah,  
But O the mullah's daughter!

As oft the mosque I stand admiring—  
Conceit it makes them blind—  
They think that I have Moslem leanings,  
The mullah too he's kind.  
A sorry fellow though the mullah,  
A beauty is his daughter.

"No trifling, saib, with Moslem maidens;  
My daughter can be thine:  
Be first a Moslem," says the mullah,  
"And give up pork and wine."  
A sorry fellow is that mullah,  
But I mean have his daughter.

### THE PARIAH GIRL

I see her every day—  
And ne'er without a thrill—  
The sylph-like pariah girl  
Returning from the mill.

O let the rahmān say  
 Her touch would taint his soul,  
 I'll strike my breast and hope  
 The touch will make me whole.

When first I spoke to her  
 In arms she held a child  
 "Is that your child?" I'd asked —  
 "No," she'd replied—and smiled!

That smile has me undone  
 And gives my mind no rest  
 For thinkin' if e'er I  
 Shall press her to my breast.

#### DREAMS OF LIFE

Udder dreams were mine,  
 Though late in autumn they come true,  
 When leaves are yellow  
 And pleasures mellow,  
 But wonders too the odds will do  
 When dreams, like mine,  
 Are nigh divine.

Now all day long  
 Content I sit and dream I hear  
 The palm-trees shady  
 That praise thy lady,  
 Whose anklets dear keep jingling near  
 And out, ere long,  
 There comes a son



And I feel I  
 When at my feet she takes her seat  
 And reads out stories  
 Of Vedic glories  
 And makes my dreams of life complete,  
 With hopes long I  
 Might death defy.

SIMPLY SHY  
 (An Urdu Song)

YOU ask me how I am  
 But I make no reply,  
 You think me unpolite—  
 I'm simply shy

You take my hand in yours  
 And tears come to mine eye,  
 You call me timid dove—  
 I'm simply shy.

You raise your eyes to mine  
 But I look down and sigh,  
 You fear I do not love—  
 I'm simply shy.

THE STRANGE

WHEN the shades of night were fallin  
 And the birds each other callin  
 In the trees and temple eaves,  
 While the folk, with jest and laughter,

Home returned with loads of sheaves—  
 Softly, like a serpent glidin ,  
 Came he through the bylanes hidin .—  
 Beware, my child, beware!

All the village, lost in wonder,  
 Round the stranger stood to ponder  
 What might be his creed and land,  
 Since not one among the pundits  
 Could his lingo understand,  
 But so wondrous sung and played he,  
 Of their hearts mere playthings made he.—  
 Beware, my child, beware!

Village maids robed like the Graces,  
 Matrons too but veiling faces—  
 On their way to or from the well—  
 Round the stranger lon would loiter  
 While their bosoms rose and fell  
 At each word he sung or uttered,  
 How the wild doves leapt and fluttered!—  
 Beware, my child, beware!

Once the Rajah flauntin sashes,  
 And his bride with droopin lashes,  
 Ridin past, had paused to hear.  
 Why so pale had turned the stranger?  
 Had his looks not shown some fear?  
 Sure his voice had strangely altered,  
 Sure his fingers they had faltered.—  
 Beware, my child, beware!

When the day was slowly breaking  
 And the birds each other wakin ,

Loud was heard the palace gong.  
 Dumb with terror was the village—  
 Why the mournful tale prolong?  
 Great my dread when love-light flashes,  
 As in you, through drooping lashes —  
 Beware, my child, beware!

### THE NEGLECTED WIFE

(A Goa Song)

Three years this day—nor more nor less—  
 Though married I have been,  
 I know not yet what marriage means,  
 And now I'm past eighteen,  
 And this young age creates a rage  
 Of such desires, upon my breast  
 This end of saree *will not* rest

My husband he to Bombay went  
 Now three years but a day  
 He writes so seldom, never writes  
 When home return he may,  
 While all declare I'm young and fair,  
 But what is beauty, youth to me  
 Deprived of love and liberty?

On Sundays, when to church I go,  
 For love, not God, I yearn,  
 The young men there they smile to me  
 And I their smiles return.  
 May God forgive the life I live,  
 But when I think upon my lot  
 I can't suppress the sinful thought.

I went last week to a weddin feast,  
 The young man I dined beside  
 And danced with too he danced and said,  
 "I would you were my bride!"  
 I felt so glad, I felt so sad,  
 But felt too shy to make reply  
 And tear on tear came to mine eye

This morning I confessed in hopes  
 Some comfort I might win  
 A fool was I!—the cold old priest  
 Sees naught besides my sin  
 I feel so sad, I feel so bad,  
 May God upon me pity take—  
 I feel my heart is like to break.

### TO GRAY-EYES

WHAT hour the dear birds go to roost  
 I come to you, Gray-Eyes  
 A witching hour indeed, but not  
 So witching as you, Gray-Eyes.

What time the moon shines full and bright  
 I gaze on you, Gray-Eyes:  
 The moon I find her fair, but not  
 So fair as you, Gray-Eyes.

When first the dewdrops kiss the rose  
 I too kiss you, Gray-Eyes:  
 Ah sweet is then the rose, but not  
 So sweet as you, Gray-Eyes.

Thou hast not a few to me are dear—  
 Just as to you, Gray-Eyes—  
 Not one is dear as you: am I  
 As dear to you, Gray-Eyes?

### SPRING IS COME!

ALL day long they sing or hum,  
 "Spring is come, lad spring is come!"  
 Yet no gladness comes to me.  
 All in flower silk-cotton trees  
 Every side I see them rise,  
 Full of starlings, jays, crows  
 Sipping nectar with loud cries,  
 "Spring is come, lad spring is come!"  
 Yet no gladness comes to me,  
 None at all because of thee—  
 False Gray-Eyes, because of thee.

### BUTTERFLIES

BUTTERFLIES  
 All fluttering so gay,  
 And I feasting mine eyes  
 As joyful as they!  
 Till you come on the scene—  
 You haunting Gray-Eyes—  
 You come in between  
 And chase them away—  
 My poor butterflies  
 You chase them away,  
 O you cruel Gray-Eyes!

## NEMESIS

The moon tonight shines full and bright  
 But brings my heart no joy,  
 For one wild night I cursed her light  
 That did my love annoy

And now full soon, O outraged moon,  
 The curse recoils on me,  
 And *her* likewise—alas, Gray-Eyes!—  
 Whom ne'er again I'll see

## THE LETTER

FIVE years this day  
 I came away  
 From her I love,  
 And for whose sake  
 I'd made my foe  
 The world below  
 And Heaven above,  
 Though Christ had come between us.

My parting threat  
 She'd smiled thereat  
 With cruel disdain,  
 So glad was she  
 The way was clear  
 For one more dear  
 I might have slain,  
 Had Christ not come between us

Five years—five years  
 Of sighs and tears—  
 And ne'er a token,  
 Nor, till her love  
 Is off his head  
 And worse than dead,  
 The silence broken,  
 For Christ had come between us.

In words that bite  
 She dares now write.  
 "I know you're good—  
 For love of Christ  
 Forgive, forget,  
 And trust me yet "  
 And fain I would,  
 But Christ will come between us

### A DOU LE DREAM

S     was making her toilet,  
 When I stole from behind  
 And covered her eyes,  
 Then I read in the mirror,  
 "She loves you    ow duly  
 Or this blush, would not rise "  
 And I read on her mind,  
 "Had he loved me not truly  
 Would he come from behind  
 And cover mine eyes?"

So I said to myself  
 "It was only a dream,

And the serpent seen there  
 Awaiting to bite me,  
 And my true love resemblin',  
 All empty as air—  
 When are dreams what they seem?"  
 And I woke up a-tremblin'.  
 It was only a dream,  
 And the serpent was there.

### LOVE AND PRIDE

DAWN and music in the house!  
 Far from fair, they think, the bride,  
 One fair woman's all I see,  
 Sad at heart she waits for me:  
 Short the road to reach her side—  
 Why not let old by-ones be?  
 Thy pride may prove the curse of thee.

Wine and cheers within the hall!  
 Ride and room a happy pair!  
 One sad woman's all I see,  
 Still she waits in vain for me:  
 Haste, thou wretch, and soothe the fair—  
 Why prolong this agony?  
 Thy pride may prove the death of thee.

### THE TALESTUNDR

Sad lad I made her suffer!  
 Won't she burst now into tears  
 At sight of me, cruel-hearted,



Made her suffer six lon years!  
 But ladly she'll forgive me •  
 Soon as I have kissed her tears

But here's the house, an angel's:  
 Enter we now heaven, my heart . . . .  
 Good Heavens, a bride and bride room!  
 Glances soft begins to dart—  
 The vile, vindictive woman!—  
 With soft glances breaks my heart!

#### THE BROKEN HEART

YOU have broken my heart, Gray-Eyes,  
 And I die ere my time:  
 God forgive you the crime!  
 But I won't be lon there,  
 Be the place e'er so fair  
 And called heaven or paradise—  
 And why should I care?  
 I want nothing but you, Gray-Eyes  
 So mind now, cruel woman, mind:  
 When you're combing your hair  
 I will come from behind  
 And cover your eyes.



## HUMOROUS POEMS



# THE LORD OF CREATION

A Hasty breakfast over,  
 Within myself content, \*  
 With all the world at peace,  
 Into the town I went—  
 The lord of creation I'

Quiet feeding on the arba e,  
 That in a street there lay,  
 Were pariah dogs, whose looks  
 They seemed to plead and say,  
 "The slaves of creation we!"

Farther on, while their children  
 They scratched each other's face,  
 Two ladies swore e ou h  
 To shame the human race—  
*Ladies* of creation they'

I bit my tongue, and then,  
 Returning the same way,  
 Distinct I heard the do s  
 To one another say,  
 "The lord of creation, he!"

## LIM O

IF e'er I sneered at mother  
 When I found her prayin  
 That heathens might be Christians,  
 She would chide me, sayin :

"You know not, son, of limbo  
 Where the heathens go,  
 Naught like its awful darkness  
 Find we here below

"To think of human beings  
 Doomed to such a fate!——"  
 "Or," thoughtless I would break in,  
 "Kicked from heaven's gate!

"Nay, rather be a heathen  
 And in darkness dwell  
 Than be a Christian burning  
 In the fires of hell!"

At this retort poor mother,  
 With her eyes to heaven,  
 Would strike her breast, imploring  
 I might be forgiven.

But I did truly mean it,  
 And of limbo thought  
 As of a cave with benches;  
 Nor so sad the lot

But, God a comrade ranting  
 Either side of me,  
 I might in friendly converse  
 Pass eternity . . .

Last night I died, a heathen,  
 And in limbo rose  
 And found myself—O horror!—  
 'Tween my deadliest foes.

## THE FORTUNE-TELLER

FO TU -T LL , memsaib<sup>1</sup>  
 Tell fortune very well,  
 Past, present, future tell,  
 A only one rupee  
 My fortune-telling fee—  
 Fortune-teller, memsaib<sup>1</sup>

Saib's hand one minute see  
 No like no pay my fee  
 Saib plenty money make,  
 But cunning people take.  
 Saib's luck to marry twice,  
 The second memsaib nice,  
 So nice and pretty wife  
 Keep saib *dilkoosh* all life.  
 She give saib children three,  
 And darling dear they be:  
 First come two boys, then girl  
 Just like the beauty pearl.  
 Saib reading mighty much,  
 Religion books and such  
 Saib's star it rise in west—  
 No understand the rest,  
 I tell no more no less  
 But what be pucca guess.  
 Saib's years now forty-four,  
 Live certain forty more  
 No lie, saib see this here,  
 This line show age quite clear,  
 I never telling lie—  
 What good do saib or I?  
 No good, and why I should?

Saib's fortune very good  
 I get now plenty pice,  
 Saib's fortune very nice

# BEGGARS

ONE eve in sultry May  
 While I, more grave than gay,  
 Sat gazing, wondering, at the sky—  
 As I am wont to do—  
 Two wily beggars, passing by,  
 They stopped and asked me for a pie  
 I hadn't a pie with me—  
 Ah, what was I to do?  
 I'm so afraid of them,  
 Since something happened to——  
 I'm so afraid of them

The scoundrels wouldn't believe  
 I had no pies to give,  
 And one he said, "Just hear him, *bhat*\*—  
 He have no pie! and you,  
 You tell me saib *lok*\* tell no lie,  
 I know this saib have plenty pie,"  
 And home they followed me—  
 Ah, what was I to do?  
 I have a dread of them,  
 Since something happened to——  
 I have a dread of them

In Hindustani, *bhat* means *brother* and *lok*  
 means *people*



## MISTER BROWN

I ET this morn my neighbour Brown  
 The happiest man, as good folk say,  
 The happiest man in all the town,  
 And who am I to murmur nay?—  
 Is not the world turned upside-down?

“Good morning, Mister Brown,” I said,  
 “I daresay, Mister, you have found  
 What like it must be to be dead?  
 You work, it seems, all underground ”  
 At this my neighbour he turned red.

“At break of day you are away,  
 And never home till it is night,  
 You never see the sunshine gay—  
 ‘No work no pay,’ say you?—that’s right  
 What, never had a holiday

“But once! there was some heathen feast?  
 Good gracious, didn’t know what to do!  
 An hour didn’t mind it in the least?  
 Felt so queer, took a peg or two?  
 What, slept the whole day like a beast!

“No wonder, friend, they envy you,  
 The happiest man in all the town,  
 Indeed, since all the world’s askew ”—  
 “Good morning,” says then Mister Brown,  
 And off he goes—and whistling too!

## CARPE DIEM

ENOUGH, my heart,  
 No more will I obey thee,  
 We two shall part,  
 Lest I in cold blood slay thee

What mean these dreams?  
 The end is sure disaster,  
 The best, meseems,  
 Is reason, for a master

I'll take the plough  
 But *no* thought for the morrow,  
 So part we now—  
 Away with dreams and sorrow!

Says poor dear heart  
 "Obey or disobey me,  
 I cannot part,  
 So come in cold blood slay me "

## A CHAT WITH THE CROW

COME, comrade, come we'll have a chat . .  
 What scandal?—care a fig for that!  
 They hate you so?—they hate me too,  
 And 'tis the best thing we can do  
 Be chums—are you not of my mind?  
 A fellow feeling makes us kind

Men hate you, why?—you steal by day?  
 Before their very noses, eh?

A hundred ways too, all their lives,  
 You vex them and their cooks and wives?  
 My friend, why steal you not by night,  
 And vex as *they* vex—out of sight?

They also curse your cawing (you know),  
 Which I for worlds would not forego  
 I jest?—no, take my word, 'tis true—  
 And here is something nice for you  
 Next time we meet please look not glum  
 But greet and treat me like a chum

### THE CORONATION

CHILD, child, be not afraid, 'tis I,  
 Father, come back—why should you cry?  
 There's something shines upon my brow?  
 'Tis stars before your eyes—not now?  
 Cry not, such things have I to tell,  
 The wondrous things that me befell  
 But first we'll on our knees and pray,  
 Thank God that gives this happy day

I know not how it came about,  
 But in the garden fast asleep  
 I lay—you know what place, my boy—  
 Or maybe I was dreaming deep,  
 When with these words, "I wish thee joy!"  
 A fairy kissed me, and I woke  
 And all around me there were birds,  
 In number quite enough to choke,  
 And every colour, shape and size,

Like birds they sung, like men they spoke  
 Above me flocks of butterflies  
 Hung like a cloudlet in the skies.

And then the martin—who, you know,  
 Each day to wash God's feet must go—  
 Advancing with a pompous gait,  
 "Excuse me if I made ye wait,"  
 He said, "but stop this noise and din,  
 And let the ceremony begin

Forward, thou dhyal,  
 Best loved thou art,  
 Like a queen royal  
 Sit on his heart

"Come, little bird,  
 Called by him Sweet—  
 All the world heard—  
 Sit at his feet

"Bird of the South,  
 Shy little Miss,  
 Right on the mouth  
 Give him a kiss

"Flycatcher gay,  
 Lucky thou art,  
 Great is the day,  
 Play thy great part,  
 This pretty crown,  
 Rainbow dyed,  
 Feather and down,  
 Place on his head . . .

“Crowned is our King—  
 Handsomely done!—  
 Till the skies ring  
 Sing everyone  
*Crowning the King*”

And they sung on and sung such a strain  
 Ne'er its like will be heard again  
 And the children about came to hear  
 (They were in the garden quite near),  
 Some riding on donkeys—dear hearts!—  
 And others in little go-carts,  
 All with ayahs or chokra boys  
 Came crying, “What a noise! what a noise!”

Delighted was I beyond words,  
 Though a trifle ashamed, for the birds  
 They pecked at my beard so white  
 One thing alone marred my delight,  
 Indeed was not easy to bear  
 Not a crow was allowed in the feast  
 To approach me or join in the feast,  
 So here they have come for their share.—  
 “A treat, please Your Majesty now.”  
 Just hear what they say, my son.  
 A treat to be sure—or a row!  
 A treat to the crows—what treat fun!

#### THE OLD IRANI

SLY rogue, the old Irani!  
 Has made a lakh, they say—  
 A lakh in land and money—

By mixing milk with *pani*  
 What if she bolt away—  
 The young Madame Irani—  
 With all the fellow's money?  
 Beware now, Abdul Gani,  
 Beware of *Kala Pani*†  
 And meddle not with money!

She thinks I be some rajah—  
 Some rajah in disguise—  
 And sure to taste like honey,  
 Wouldn't mind a little *majah*,‡  
 I read it in her eyes.  
 But wait a bit, my rani,  
 I'll give you yet your honey,  
 And teach the old Irani  
 To mix my milk with *pani*  
 And feed himself with honey!

\*Water.

†The Penal Settlement in the Andamans  
 is known among Indians as *Kala Pani*

‡Enjoyment

## POEMS OF MY MOTHERLAND





### MY MOTHERLAND

BECAUS of knaves and fools  
 I fled my motherland,  
 My poor dear motherland,  
 Now with an aching heart  
 I wander, far, apart  
 But what is this I see?  
 Green hills on either hand,  
 Green hills of motherland—  
 They rise and frown on me!

Into this church I'll go  
 And on my knees I'll pray,  
 To Mary Mother pray,  
 Such faith have I in prayer  
 No hills shall rise up there  
 But what is that I see?  
 My mother! clear as day  
 I see her kneel and pray—  
 Oh, it will madden me!

### THE FEAST OF FLOWERS

EACH morn, each morn,  
 I wake half dreamy, I wake and say,  
 Arise, O heart, and bless the day!  
 When, lo, I hear a girl's voice calling,  
 "Coming, Clara—coming, dear?"  
 And her scurrying feet, her tiny feet,  
 Like dewdrops falling, pit-pat falling  
 Early morning, pearly morning,  
 Make music soft, that liquid sweet

It falls upon mine ear,  
 And I cannot rise, I cannot pray,  
 For the feast of flowers is drawing near  
 And my héart is far away.

At last, at last  
 I rise all sad, I rise and say,  
 Now take thy cross and go thy way!  
 But then I hear the church-bells ringing,  
 Ding dong merry, ding dong clear!  
 And as silver clear, as silver sweet,  
 All in a chorus children singing,  
 "Queen of heaven, pray for us!"  
 While flowers are flung about Her feet,  
 About Her feet so dear,  
 And I cannot work but halting-wise,  
 For the feast of flowers is drawing near  
 And the old old yearnings rise

### THE DEAR HILLSIDE

MA SIO S, mansions all around—  
 Not one cottage anywhere!  
 O to see the dear old spot  
 With my neat and cosy cot  
 On the dear hillside!

Noises, noises night and day—  
 'Nough to drive one to despair!  
 O to hear the cattle lowing  
 And his pipe the herd-boy blowing  
 On the dear hillside!

Strangers, strangers every side—  
 From the casements how they stare!  
 O to feel the fresh green grass  
 Quiet beside mine own sweet lass  
 On the dear hillside!

### THE WHITE BIRD

Dedicated to my dear kinsmen Hipolito Joao Furtado and Jose Manuel Santana Furtado, who were kind enough to give me back my ancestral home

What a god-forsaken place!  
 Yet was it a pleasant valley,  
 With the house where I was born  
 And the gentle hill behind it,  
 That but now I had looked upon  
 And two owl-like birds from thither,  
 Which had perched upon the tree  
 I was under, me beholding,  
 With one voice had cried, "'Tis he!  
 Wandering homeless seven years past—  
 Now the white bird comes at last"  
 Goranpoki birds were they, I know,  
 My good old grandaunt spoke about  
 In the fairy tales she told us  
 Little children long ago.

Strangely now my heart is throbbing,  
 Sure enough the bird is coming—

Coming, coming, coming,  
 I hear the flutter of its wings  
 Above the bell my father rings,  
 The bell of Candelaria!  
 And there I see the blessed Lady,

On the altar see Her stand,  
 Not wroth as last I saw Her—  
 In my flight across the land,  
 When She had chid me, saying,  
     “Why comest thou to Me?”

If Heaven hath punished thee  
 As heaven is to others

Thy country was to thee!”—  
 But full of love and pity  
 And the Christ-Child in Her arms—  
     “Follow me, follow me!”—

He’s smiling—look! and calling  
     “Follow me, follow me!”—

O sweet and clear  
 Upon mine ear  
 The Child’s sweet words are falling—  
     “Follow me, follow me!”—

Waking hopes of bliss untold

But, lo, what bird is this above me?—  
     “Follow me, follow me!”—

A silver bird with human voice?  
 Where’s the blessed Child and Mother?—  
     “Follow me, follow me!”—

O! hath the Child become a bird?  
 Then how am I so strangely stirred,  
 And the bird’s voice like a balm  
 It soothes my troubled heart?

Yea, I’ll follow thee, my little bird,  
 Follow thee as once I followed,

Across a lonesome wild  
 For full seven years, a child,  
 When at every step mine eyes  
 Had had peeps at paradise

Gladly will I follow thee,  
 But hasten not so, I implore,  
 Yea hasten not, good bird,  
 For bare my feet are, bare and sore  
 Look, ev'n the wayside flowers

They pity me, poor things,  
 This balm misfortune brings,  
 Not so in the happier years  
 When I was wont to say,  
 "Good morning, little ones!"

And my eyes would fill with tears!—  
 What cared ye for an old man's greeting?  
 And now we meet—how sad a meeting!  
 Enough! Forgive! Ye care, ye care!

"My son, my son!"—

Sure I heard a voice!

Or is it the winds that moan

In yonder glen?—

"My son, my son!"—

There again!—and like mine own,  
 The voice I feared yet live to bless—

"My son, my son!"—

Thy voice, stern prophetess!  
 Ah, hadst thou not prophesied,

The deed I had not done,  
 'Twas thy words, more than my pride,  
 Impelled me and I fell

Forgive, forgive thy son!  
 Lo, the mark upon my brow  
 A wanderer makes of me,  
 So stern was Fate's decree,  
 And stern as Fate wert thou  
 Yet, mother, it is well:

Had not thy sternness made me strong.  
 Could I my fate have borne so long?

Bird, what hill is this before us?  
 Great the hopes that rise in me  
 See how glad, though mine is descending,  
 See how glad I follow thee.—

Hark the bell,  
 The bell of Candelaria!  
 Well I know it, well,  
 Would know it from a thousand others,  
 The dear dear bell of Candelaria!—

“*Virgem Purissima,*  
*Senhora Mae de Deus,*  
*Rogae a Jesus por nós!*”—  
 And the hymn, the blessed hymn,  
 Children sing with joyful hearts  
 Before Our Lady's shrine,  
 How it swells upon the breeze,  
 Then, floating down the hillside, comes  
 And fills my heart with joy divine!

But what strange hill is this?  
 And how came I upon its side?  
 Can it be the fateful hill  
 Where Christ our Lord was crucified?  
 Something, up the slope,  
 Something like a cross I see,  
 A white bird poised above . . . .  
 Not a cross but crucifix,  
 It hangs upon a wall  
 (The bird too is but a dove),  
 And one on bended knee  
 Before it . . . 'tis a hall . . . .

A room            my mother's room .  
 There she is! my stern, pious mother  
     (Stern, yet how dear!),  
 A censer in her hand—  
 What sweet perfume!—  
     How came I here?  
 Doth she not see me? yet I feel  
     She knoweth I am near  
 (Beside her let me go and kneel)  
 Or seeth and doth not care?—  
     O thoughtless one!  
 Did she e'er turn aside from prayer?  
 And, now she prayeth for her son,  
 The house might fall about her ears,  
 Ne'er will she turn, O ne'er!  
 But what is this she's doing? hath done?—  
 Oh mine eyes they are blind with tears  
 With ashes from the censer she  
 Hath crossed the mark upon my brow—  
 Hath crossed it out for ever!  
  
 What sweet sensations thrill me now!  
 What visions beautiful I see!  
 That's my sire, my gentle sire,  
     Ringing the bell,  
 The dear dear bell of Candelaria!  
 And those others they must be  
     Forbears of mine,  
 Eager all to welcome me . . .  
 Children, angels, seraphim  
 Sing the blessed blessed hymn—  
     Oh the melody divine!

## TO THE MANDOVÌ

TA     it not ill, I entreat thee,  
 That with no raptures I greet thee,  
        Dear River Mandovì  
 Careworn and weary I meet thee,  
        Dear River Mandovì

Many great churches adorn thee,  
 Many bright sons have been born thee—  
        God prosper all, Mother!—  
 Who among these looked so upon thee  
        As I do, O mother?

Some for thy rich leaping treasure,  
 Others for motives of pleasure  
        May love thee, Mandovì,  
 Who loves thee, as I beyond measure,  
        For thy own self, Mandovì?

Ne'er a year passed but I sought thee,  
 Ne'er a night came but it brought thee  
        In dreams to me, Mother,  
 Reverent now I have wrought thee  
        A love-wreath, O Mother!

Poor though the gift, like the river,  
 All my heart goes with it, River,  
        Dear River Mandovì,  
 Goes to thee now and for ever,  
        O Mother Mandovì!



### MY NATIVE LAND

HILL and valleys everywhere!  
 On each hill a cross or shrine,  
 In each valley cots and farms  
 Other lands may be as fair,  
 Yet what land, what land but mine,  
 Is so blest with homely charms?  
 Land of palm and mango-tree,  
 Dear as life art thou to me

### MY VILLAGE

FOR little hills with bulbuls gay  
 Warbling on cashew-trees all day,  
 A gentle stream, a paddy-field  
 Twice a year and like a garden tilled,  
 And little huts, in groves of palm,  
 With peasant folk content and calm  
 And once these things were all to me,  
 But never, never more can be.

### SWEET HOME

A LITTLE hill with cashew-trees,  
 And on its slope a little cot,  
 With sweet and tender memories  
 Buzzing like bees about the spot:  
 My feet may wander where they will,  
 My heart ne'er leaves the little hill.

## THE CHOIR-MASTER

NE came Death into our village  
 But he brought me grace  
 If I joined the sad procession  
 To the resting-place

Then I heard the dear choir-master  
 (Old was he and kind),  
 He would chant the *Miserere*  
 Brought me peace of mind

Brought such peace, at every burial  
 "May he live," said I,  
 'Live to chant the *Miserere*  
 O'er me when I die!'

Now that comfort 'tis denied me—  
 Wherefore, God knows best.  
 This sad day the good old master  
 He was laid to rest

## THE VILLAGE COWBOY

HE haunts me still—the little boy—  
 With cries of pain or songs of joy,  
 At break of day he took our cows,  
 And while he went from house to house  
 He sung, the merry boy

"Child," mother every morn would say,  
 "There's Pedro sin'g—rise and pray"  
 And never rose I from the bed

But prayed that Pedro might be dead,  
I did, indeed, so pray.

At last one morn it came to pass  
A snake lay hiding in the grass  
And bit him so, for all they tried,  
In agonies the boy he died:  
They moaned "Alas! alas!"

Long years have past the same old way  
The village wags and ever may,  
But now in each familiar lane  
The poor boy's cries I hear again—  
Such penalty I pay!

### THE MANGO

THE child would none but the best mango,  
Was juicy both and sweet,  
The beggar bought the fruit and smiled  
To see his dear son eat  
I wished I were that happy child  
Eating the mango sweet

The father watched him eat the mango,  
His face aglow with love,  
Then wiped the mouth of his dear boy  
And thanked the gods above  
Sweeter, I thought, the father's joy  
Drinking that cup of love.

# RUZAI

I WOULD my sleep had endless been,  
 So had my joy been endless too,  
 I saw him spread the altar cloth,  
 As here on earth he used to do

The village tailor was Ruzai,  
 Who made no more than common clothes,  
 Such things as tail-coats dreaded he,  
 And ladies' frocks with furbelows

What though he worked from dawn to dusk  
 The village folk they thought him slow  
 "And were I quicker," he would say,  
 "Could I to heaven the quicker go?"

"No, quick or slow, 'tis all the same,  
 Our days on earth they are but four,  
 Yet they who serve the Church may hope—  
 Pray make me sacristan, senhor "

I then was just a little lad,  
 But soon as I became a man  
 Ruzai attained his heart's desire,  
 For he became our sacristan.

Oftt did I watch him serve at Mass  
 Or put the sacred vestments by,  
 Long in the vestry lined he  
 And never left without a sigh.

I would my sleep had endless been  
 Or good Ruzai had been my guide,

These torments then would not be mine,  
In peace I might have lived and died

### THE COBRA

Not before, in all these years,  
Had he appeared by day,  
Though known to hide among the stones  
That near the jack-tree lay

But oft had he at night been seen—  
A terror to all around!—  
The deadly cobra, for whose bite  
A cure may not be found

So folk, though come with sticks and stones,  
Affrighted back have hung:  
With hood spread out the snake has stopped  
And shoots his forky tongue

Here from the crowd a fearless lad  
Darts forth—beware, beware!  
But one deft stroke and all is o'er—  
A writhen form lies there.

Now safe the good old sacristan  
To church at night may go,  
Nor need again walk past the tree  
With wary steps and slow

And come, good folk, give thanks to God  
Has rid ye of this bane,

And *he* may murmur to himself—  
The fool will ne'er explain

•

### A GOOD FRIDAY

WH his corse was lowered no bells were  
    *Gone for ever!*— [ringing—  
Only people, in the church, were singing  
    *Stabat Mater*  
But through every window winds came sighing  
    *Gone for ever!*  
Where upon the floor a child was lying—  
Faint, poor child, with pain and crying,  
    Faint as ever!

Two score years and still the words are ringing—  
    *Gone for ever!*—  
Still the people, in the church, are singing  
    *Stabat Mater,*  
And they will until mine hour of dying—  
    *Gone for ever!*—  
'Tis an iron fate I keep defying—  
Would that I in the grave were lying,  
    Quiet for ever!

### VISHNULAL

“I’ sorry, Vishnual, though jewels  
On show you have alone,  
The jewel I prize you never show ”—  
“What jewel mean you, senhor?”—  
“Your daughter, Vishnual ”—

“One moment, please, I’ll call her out:

‘Is Savitrī not there?’ ”

When soon a child of ten appeared,

And she was more than fair,

The child of Vishnulal

No oldsmith round about but sure

A scoundrel born was he,

And cheated friend and foe alike,

Yet soon I came to be

A friend of Vishnulal

And oft to him said I: “Think not

I flatter or deride,

But truly, sett, she’s fair enough

To be a rajah’s bride,

Your daughter, Vishnulal.”

A lonely man was I, and fears

Lest Fate should make us part

Would steal upon me—oh the child

Brought sunshine to my heart,

The child of Vishnulal.

And now it so befell there came

A scourge upon th<sup>e</sup> land,

And cries of mourning, night and day,

Were heard on every hand.—

I feared for Vishnulal.

Nor long did Fate delay—one morn,

Though deaths had then been few,

Above the women’s wail there rose

What pierced my poor heart through,

This cry of Viṣṇulal

“Gone, gone,—the rajah’s bride—senhor!”

So true had come my fears . . .

A lonely man am I, and still

That cry it smites mine ears,

The cry of Viṣṇulal.

### BI RDS AND NEIGHBOURS

W        I was young and went all day

Bird-nesting, oft would neighbours say,

“These birds will be his ruin ”

’Tis not with age my hair is grey,

And well might birds now turn and say,

“’Tis all his neighbours’ doin’.”

### THE PROPHECY

A        there was—had travelled wide—

Would come and sit all day

In our *balcao* and tell with pride

Of countries far away.

And, if he caught me (oft he did)

Coming from stream or hill,

He’d shake his head, would shake his head

And say, “Do what you will,

“My friend, but this your child, I fear,

If once he leave his home,



His home and all he will for et  
And only love to roam ”

Right well remember I his words  
And how my sire he'd si h  
The prophet' were he livin now,  
He'd find his words a lie.

I've travelled far, I've travelled wide,  
The Ghats and Ganges seen,  
But ne'er my native hills and streams  
Less dear to me have been.

### THE LAST OF THEM

O LY a poor old peasant dead,  
The last of all the rustic band,  
And yet the news has made me sad:  
Is it because he tilled our land?  
I seldom was so sad before

Is it because he ave me joy  
When drinking ro before our door  
And said, “Go fetch some pickle, boy ”?  
Now grog and pickle are no more.  
I seldom was so sad before.

Is it because he wished me well  
And ave me welcome to my land?—  
And gave it first?—I cannot tell:  
I'll shake no more a peasant's hand  
I seldom was so sad before.

## THE GHOST OF SALIGAO HILL

The following ballad is founded upon an incident that happened in Goa over sixty years ago. The ghost haunting the hill is said to be that of a woman of the adjoining village of Saligao who having gone astray during her husband's absence in Bon bay and hearing that he was about to return home, had drowned herself in a well

DONG! dong! dong! clear the angelus  
Is ringing down below.

"Ave Maria!" he exclaims,  
"How slow the horses go!"

It is a cleric, young and hale,  
So late returning home  
The cabman cracks his whip and makes  
The horses fret and foam

But fast the beasts they dare not go,  
So narrow and so steep  
The road is, while the dell anear  
Is dark and dangerous deep

"What dismal howls are these that rise,  
Good driver, in our rear?"—

"Tis but a hungry dog that howls,  
Your Reverence need not fear"—

"But, there, good driver, tell me, pray,  
What figure may that be,  
That still-white figure standin lone  
Beneath the peepul-tree?"—

"A still-white figure?—ah, 'tis but  
A woman I see there,  
A woman waiting for some one  
Or saying her vesper prayer."

A woman, aye, it was, both young  
 And lovely to behold,  
 Dressed in an *oll* of stainless white  
 And decked with gems and gold.

Upon this hill no man may drive  
 But he must needs allow  
 The panting beasts a breathing-space  
 So did the cabman now.

She came and sate beside the priest  
 Without the least ado,  
 Crack wert the whip! and down the hill  
 Away the horses flew

So fair and young was she the priest  
 Felt tempted—who would not?  
 But, in his sin, the wretched man  
 To cross himself forgot

And woe to such!—what makes him now  
 Paler and paler grow?  
 Protect him, Heaven!—he knows not why  
 The woman's staring so,

The while each moment she appears  
 Less lovely and less young,  
 Oh!—can he trust his eyes?—he thinks  
 He sees a forky tongue—

A hideous speckled coil—O Christ!  
 He staggers in his seat  
 With hood erect there glares defiant  
 A cobra at his feet

And whoso sees this cobra fiend  
 Not long alive may be,  
 His Reverence thus, his journey done,  
 A corse all cold was he!

### THE ITALIAN ARCHITECT

SO tell the good old Austin friars  
 Who helped the church to raise—  
 The stateliest church in all the land,  
 In Goa's golden days.

Such crowds from town and country as  
 The townsfolk ever saw  
 Around the church they waited now  
 In wonder and in awe.

For, there, that sunny April morn  
 A thrillin' sight would see,  
 Foredoomed to end in triumph his  
 Or risly tragedy.

And many a rich fidalgoo too  
 Was ridin' to the scene,  
 With donas and donzelas fair  
 In gay-drest palankeen.

And, last, the noble Viceroy, lo,  
 With all his courtiers gay  
 And to the sound of fife and drum,  
 Arrived in proud array.

Then bold the architect advanced,  
 But soon to make a halt  
 Near where a loaded cannon lay,  
 Beneath the wondrous vault

The vault that twice before his skill  
 And labour did defy,  
 But now his firm resolve it was  
 To conquer or to die.

So there he stood to test the work  
 His little orphan boy  
 With winsome face and light-blue eyes,  
 Sole pledge of wedded joy,

Was clinging to his neck—poor child!—  
 Unconscious all of harm,  
 The while his sire, a lighted lunt  
 In hand, awaited calm.

Some seconds then a silence fell,  
 And hushed was every breath . . . .  
 The cannon boomed—but shouts of joy  
 Proclaimed them saved from death.

Thereon a loud Te Deum rose  
 In one harmonious swell—  
 The voices of the multitude  
 Commingling with the bell

And there was joy among the friars  
 Who helped the church to raise,  
 And that brave son of Italy  
 Had due reward and praise

And long did that great vault attest—  
 Intact mid ruins hoary—  
 The genius of the architect  
 And Goa's short-lived glory.

### DOM GUZMAO

OL Dom Guzman, in faded frock  
 Yet with a haughty brow,  
 Who sings beside the palace gate,  
 A rich fidalgo but of late,  
 A poor man is he now.

The Vicereine, Dona Izabel,  
 A kind kind lady is she,  
 A lady so kind to all, but most  
 To folk of her own countree.

“Who sings now there, who plays now there,  
 So early in the day?  
 He sings so sweet, he plays so sweet,  
 My prayers I scarce can say”—

“Tis I, good senhora, Dom Guzman  
 Your Excellency's slave,  
 Long may Your Excellency live  
 To help the unhappy brave!”—

“O Dom Guzman (how flushed a face!),  
 I wonder what you do!  
 You've spent, I fear, the three pardaos  
 I owe last week to you.

'Yet three more wil' I give you now  
 If you will sing again  
 The best three songs of our countree,  
 On glory, love and pain "

And Dom Guzman he sings the best  
 Three songs of his countree,  
 And takes his pay and goes his way—  
 A poor fidalgo he!

### THE PILGRIMS

On the morning of December 3, 1901, the feast-day of St. Francis Xavier, a launch, conveying passengers very much in excess of the permissible number, foundered in the Mandovi River through sheer overweight. Of the 200 persons on board, mostly pilgrims to the city of Old Goa where the miraculous remains of the Saint are preserved and where the feast is held, over eighty were drowned. When this sad accident occurred, the Viceroy of Portuguese India, who was having his morning drive by the river-side remarked that the victims must be low people, and troubled himself no further.

"Awake, dear mother, 'tis the cock's first crow—  
 Awake, arise, for we have far to go  
 Mother, I heard a voice say, 'Come, my child.'  
 I woke and saw Saint Francis—sweet he smiled "

"Awake, dear bride, a sad sad day, I fear,  
 Has dawned for us—awake, my love, and hear.  
 I dreamed we lay upon a cold cold bed,  
 Locked in each other's arms we lay there—dead! "

Serene and bright arose the solemn day—  
 The feast-day of the Saint—while far away,

And up the river, with a ceaseless clang  
The time-worn bells on time-worn belfries ran .

That mother and her child with hearts full glad,  
That bridegroom and his bride with hearts half sad,  
Of many many pilgrims were but four  
The overladen, fateful vessel bore.

Now where are they?—A wild cry rends the air!  
A cry from men to God—ye need not stare,  
Nor thou, reat Viceroy, needest halt thy car  
Why fear reproach?—mere dregs these pilgrims are

But where are they, these dregs?—Go ask the waves  
That break and wanton heedless o'er their raves:  
What answer they?—They answer one by one,  
“Go ask thy King, O child—what have we done!”

### BYGONE DAYS

ALL day I ramble on the hills  
Or loiter pensive by the rills,  
As in the days gone by  
The birds about they sing as light,  
The wild flowers too they blow as bright,  
As in the days' gone by  
Why rise tears to mine eye!



## REFLECTIVE POEMS



## A LESSON

IT was a pleasant morn  
 And birds were piping gaily,  
 So pleasant was my walk—  
 I love to take it daily.

And on my walk I met  
 A woman—looked so wily—  
 Had oranges for sale,  
 And her I questioned dryly:

“How much for one?—no lies.”—  
 “Look, saib, to speak untruly  
 Four pice one, truly three,  
 And, mind, I plucked them newly”.—

“Three pice for one! two pice  
 Are ample,” so I told her.—  
 “And nothing for myself,  
 Big saib? Are you not older,

“And richer? why not ~~then~~  
 Be kinder, saib, and wiser?”  
 The woman asked, and home  
 Came I—but not a *miser*!

And thus on every walk,  
 While birds keep piping aily.  
 In some such pleasant talk  
 I learn a lesson daily.

## BIDEE-MAKERS

P OR bidee-makers! every day  
I see them, quiet they toil away

A little leaf,  
A little stuff—  
O not so much,  
Enough, enough—  
A little twist,  
A little thread,  
A little *bidee*\*—  
A little bread!

All seated in a ring or row,  
Upon the floor or in the loft,  
They work, and chat in tones but low.  
Now what is it they say?—O soft!  
“There goes the poor old man!”—the dears!  
A fountain in a vale of tears!  
I feel for them, they feel for me—  
How good, O world, could ye not be!

Poor bidee-makers! on return  
I see them still, though lights then burn.

Two score *bidees*  
Mean three pice won,  
Now in one day  
How many done?  
Just twenty score,  
Or thirty pice—  
Is that enough

\*Indian cigarette

To feed the mice?\*

At last one woman, rising, cries,  
 "My *nourat*† anxious he might be "  
 Another rises then and sighs,  
 ' My children too they'll wait for me ''  
 And there they go, the pair of them—  
 And would you kiss their garments' hem?  
 A little love and ne'er a wife  
 Or mother will she tire of life.

#### THE MILKMAN'S HUT

WHERE this unsightly pile now stands  
 There stood, not long ago,  
 A hut—I wonder what I meant  
 To tell you, friend, or show.

A pigmy's hut, you would have thought,  
 It had so small a door, .  
 But, what with plantain-trees behind,  
 A tulsi-plant before,

And, either side the tulsi-plant,  
 A uava-tree and palm,  
 The milkman's hut—for such it was  
 Had quite a homely charm

Among Indians a term of endearment applied to  
 little children

†Husband.

And many an evening did I come—  
 Despising every care—  
 To feast mine eyes upon this place  
 And breathe its pleasant air

But come away, these simple things  
 Few heed or understand,  
 'Tis city sights you've come to see—  
 And city sights are grand!

### MERCY

W AT a lovely day!  
 Fresh a breeze is blowing  
 Across the earth,  
 And, from my heart,  
 Full the fountain flowing,  
 Of joy and mirth

What now, over there,  
 Are the children doing,  
 Around the tree?  
 Looks like kittens playing,  
 Playing around and mewling.  
 We'll go and see

All around its trunk  
 Sugar they are throwing  
 For ants to eat—  
 Poor little ants!—  
 Only mercy showing—  
 They find it sweet.

And the little ones,  
 What may they be saying?  
 Naught can I hear  
 But, in your heart,  
 Gay the fountain playing—  
 Come near, come near.

### MY FRIENDS

My friends are more than I can tell,  
 I give here only three  
 The first he blows the bugle well,  
 A bugle-master he.

I meet him each and every day  
 Where tney the bugles blow,  
 He brings his child and makes him say,  
 "Big saib, how far you go?"

The child, now comely to my mind,  
 Was otherwise before,  
 And somehow day by day, I find,  
 I like the urchin more.

Another friend, and very dear,  
 With a tray large and round  
 He sits and sweetmeats sells anear  
 Saint Mary's Church-compound.

With *laddoos* for my child, one day,  
 He after me did run,  
 I took the *laddoos*—naught did pay,  
 Remembering Mary's Son.

The third of friends (you'll scarce believe)  
 Though lame I love him best,  
 Nay, should he fail to come one eve,  
 My heart will have no rest.

### UNREST

NO rest have I—all night  
 My spirit he goes a-wanderin',  
 Into a speck of dust he turns  
 And whirls away, a tiny thing,  
 For something seeks, for something yearns,  
 And flies and flies and flies  
 From star to star,  
 Away, afar,  
 At times exultant cries,  
 "I feel it on this cheek of mine,  
 I feel it low—the touch divine!"  
 And home returns and makes a rhyme,  
 Or sits in silence all the time.

No rest have I—one night  
 He sought in haste a prison cell  
 Where, raging like a wild beast, lay  
 A felon doomed to death and hell,  
 And at his feet begun to say  
 "Who beg for mercy, friend,  
 Will mercy find,  
 God's just and kind,  
 His mercy hath no end,  
 Repent, repent and be forgiven;  
 He'll close down hell and open heaven."  
 But oh the terror I was in



While he stood near that man of sin<sup>1</sup>

No rest have I—last week  
 He tended flocks at Bethlehem  
 And thence brought home some singin' birds  
 Now what, O what have I with them,  
 These singin' birds and flocks or herds?

These birds no good will bring,  
 For in my breast  
 They've made a nest  
 And night and day they sing  
 And how am I to earn my bread?  
 How long shall I be manna-fed?  
 No rest they give me night or day:  
 Good Angel, take the birds away.

#### A REMINDER

O morn beneath a roadside tree,  
 Where I had sat me down,  
 I saw a fellow—seemed to me  
 Much like a country clown—

A thick and coarse *chapatti*\* make  
 Upon a smouldering fire  
 No cooking pot or pan had he,  
 Nor did perhaps require.

And, mark, to that *chapatti* none  
 Of *ghee*† did he apply;

\*Unleavened bread

†Clarified butter

And much I marvelled one could eat  
A thing so coarse and dry

Mine angel here recalled how once  
The troubadour divine  
Poor Brother Masseo had rebuked  
For views as wrong as mine.

And all at once I longed to taste  
That bread so coarse and dry,  
And begged the man a piece and ate—  
Like manna from on high

#### THE CHILD OF LIGHT

ON by one and slow the stars of night  
They mount and shine athwart the sky  
And fade away,  
Quiet in the dark the child of light  
He works and waits, till night go by,  
To meet each day

#### THE TOIL

An old man cleft a mountain,  
Now stopped a while in pain:  
At once there sprang a fountain,  
He drank and toiled again.

Though dark the night that found him,  
The old man would not rest,  
But many a star was round him,

As if at God's behest.

Here someone flashed a dagger  
And stabbed him in the back,  
The man was seen to stagger  
And fall—alack! alack!

An angel, soon descending,  
His wound with balm did close,  
And waited, o'er him bending,  
Until the poor man rose . . .

The an el hath departed,  
The vision doth remain,  
To cheer when heavy-hearted,  
To bless when free from pain.

### THE NEGLECTED CHILD

TH R again the child is crying,  
Crawling on all fours and crying;  
He crawls or rolls all o'er the place  
And fouls his body and his face,  
Yet the child I go unheeding,  
Though my heart the while be bleeding  
And though his face and cry  
Will haunt me every hour  
Until the hour I die.

Look not so, dear child, upon me—  
Heavy, alas, God's hand is on me,  
And, should your parents find no grace,  
I'll see no more your an el face,

And, the angels should they chide me,  
 In Her mantle I shall hide me  
 (She knows, She knows my heart )  
 Until the Judgment end  
 And all the hosts depart.

### HOW LONG?

I **IT** on a stone  
 By the roadside alone  
     Pondering sadly,  
 In the grove cooes a dove  
 And a lark soars above  
     Sin in all madly.

And from over the hills  
 The slaves of the mills,  
     Toiling there daily  
 And though all night they weep on,  
 Now past me they sweep on  
     Chattering-aily.

Of a dra on at back,  
 On its rim iron track,  
     Crawls with foul breath,  
 And the incessant roar  
 Of the breakers on shore  
     Warns me—of death.

And I sit on this stone  
 By the roadside alone  
     Lullin with son  
 The cries of my heart,

And at gloaming depart  
 Musing, "How lon ?"

### RESIGNATION

A LARK delirious sings above me,  
 "Love me, love me, love me, love me!"  
 Son and love is all its pleasure—  
     Sing on, blest bird, sin on.  
 Fate me deals another measure,  
     My songs are lau hed to scorn,  
     My love's repaid with hate—  
     But you, dear bird, sin on,  
 And leave me to my fate.

The kine contented, homeward oing,  
 "Coming, coming!" they are lowing.  
 All day long their thoughts were turnin  
     To the young ones in the shed.  
 All in vain my heart is yearnin ,  
     My youn ones they have fled,  
     My home is desolate—  
     But speed ye to your shed,  
 And leave me to my fate.

### ENVY

I UILT myself a little shed,  
 And lived upon a crust of bread,  
 And drank of water for sweet wine,  
 Thinkin , "Tomorrow I'll be dead!"  
 And yet a life serene was mine,

Though none might envy, hearing which  
 A neighbour came, a neighbour rich  
 "Pray enter, sir," said I, "and share  
 With me today my frugal fare"  
 He entered gladly, shared my crust  
 And water saying, "Yea we are but dust!  
 That night my shed was set on fire,  
 By whom, not once did I inquire,  
 But thought, "Tomorrow I'll be dead!"  
 And vowed to do without a shed

#### IN THE GHATS

IT is a hillman, with his wife  
 And dusky children three,  
 Upon his way to yonder plains—  
 To find some work, says he

Tonight he rests upon this hill,  
 His asses all around,  
 His household goods and household gods  
 In little bundles bound

The famished beasts they seem to know  
 There's famine in the land,  
 For none dare eat the food there lies  
 But from their master's hand

And all is quiet about the place,  
 And quietly I depart  
 "A glimpse of heaven in mercy given  
 To quiet a troubled heart!"

## WILD BERRIES

I SAW this morn a little boy  
 Picking wild berries on the road  
 A loin-cloth it was all he had,  
 And, while he picked with artless joy,  
 A rhyme he hummed in rustic mode  
 I felt so glad, I felt so glad

A wanton bully, passing by,  
 He saw the peasant boy so gay,  
 And, turned no doubt with envy mad—  
 None other reason see could I—  
 With threats he drove the boy away  
 I felt so sad, I felt so sad.

## AN OLD LESSON

A GOODLY sight it was—  
 The field of waving corn—  
 And ripe enough to reap  
 Upon the morrow morn.  
 He'd paid their dues to those  
 Who helped the field to sow,  
 And given due praise to Him  
 Who made the corn to grow,  
 Had vowed (not all in vain)  
 To keep away from sin  
 His cares now o'er, the corn  
 Would soon be garnered in  
 A good man he that owned  
 The field, as all could tell,  
 Not like that heartless wretch—

His field had fared as well !  
 He could not understand  
 He could not help but grieve,  
 And sad he homeward went

Behold, the selfsame eve  
 A swarm of locusts came—  
 In haste they came, in haste  
 They spared the bad man's field  
 And laid the good man's waste.

### KISMAT

ASK me not whence I came, lord sarb,  
 Or what my name,  
 I, I know nothing: how should I?—  
 I live in shame

But this sardar here, smoking bhang,  
 Knows whence I came  
 And what my name: I know just this—  
 I live in shame

He stole my heart and brought me here;  
 He calls it fame,  
 To sing and dance: I can't but feel  
 I live in shame

Yet blame him not, I beg lord sarb,  
 He's not to blame,  
 He's not, indeed my kismet 'tis  
 To live in shame.



# YOU AND I, BROTHER

WE hate so each other,  
 Both you and I, brother—  
 Do we ever ask why  
 We hate so each other?  
 Tomorrow we die  
 And turn into dust  
 To swell the earth's crust,  
 Where together we lie  
 For ever and aye,  
 Both you and I, brother,  
 Who hate now each other  
 One pitiful day!

# MY PRESENT HOME

MY present home is where the folk,  
 If poor in other ways,  
 Are rich in what I prize, so here  
 I mean to end my days.

'Tis true no song-birds that I love,  
 Nor hills nor streams are here,  
 But all day round me children play,  
 And children are more dear

So peaceful I shall pass away,  
 Though far from kith and kin,  
 But that were better than to die  
 Mid scenes of strife and sin.

## FATHER HEGGLIN, S. J

H        comes good Father Hegglin,  
       Umbrellâ under arm  
 No, please, I may not meet him,  
       My pride it takes alarm.

'Tis all that urchin's doing—  
       Sudden he came and said,  
 "Mother says you're my father,  
       Please, father, give us bread "

I laughed!—the Lord forgive me!  
       I stood the church within,  
 And they without—couldn't see me,  
       But *he* might see my sin.

"Yes, everybody's father,"  
       The priest he said and smiled,  
 His face benignly radiant,  
       "Come take bread, take it, child "

I'll hide behind this pillar,  
       He never looks around:  
 His thoughts are up in heaven,  
       His eyes upon the ground.

I'll hide myself and watch him;  
       It always does me good . . .  
 Yes, I must try (God help me!)  
       To live as   ood men should

## THE SCOURGING

EY<sup>s</sup> filled with tears<sup>s</sup>  
 The child reads on  
 "They had Him scourged  
 Until He bled . . .  
 They placed a crown—  
 A crown of thorn—  
 Upon His head."  
 The sire kneels down  
 And blesses God  
 That child was born . .

An old man prays  
 Before a shrine,  
 Resigned he says,  
 "Thy will be done,  
*Thy* will, not *mine*."  
 A lash in hand,  
 Behold the son!  
 He'll scourge his sire—  
 "O curse your God!"  
 Retire, retire!

## CHRIST WITH THE CROSS

I S the whole scene—just as 'twas—  
 And there is mother to aid the child  
 \*If memory fail him or be dim:  
 The Man of Sorrows with the cross,  
 The sorrowing painter at a loss  
 To please his wild and pitiless child,  
 Who yet shall live to bear his cross

And there be none to pity him

The sight another might appall  
 But not that wild and fearless child,  
 Who now by signs makes known his whim:  
 The painter sighs and changes all—  
 The fainting Christ He's made to fall  
 He smiles—that wild and fearless child—  
 Whose hour shall come to faint and fall  
 And no good Simon succour him

More blood! more blood the brow must show,  
 Demands the wild and heartless child,  
 And watches, restless all and grim  
 The paint and brush again, and, lo!  
 Profuse the blood is seen to flow.  
 He laughs—that wild and heartless child—  
 From whose own heart yet blood shall flow  
 While his own children laugh at him!

#### SAINT ANTHONY'S CHAPEL

A CROSS on T bowl in hand  
 I'll go all o'er the land,  
 A-beggin' go, for love  
 Of good Saint Anthony:  
 His chapel on the hill  
 It makes one sad to see,  
 O never will I rest  
 Until put right again.  
 What loss, my friend, what loss?  
 (Be one, thou imp of hell!)  
 No, let me bear my cross.

Away now, for one year,  
 From town to town\* to roam  
 Goodbye, O children dear!  
 Goodbye, my happy home!

But what am I to say  
 To folk to whom I go?  
 Ne'er thought of it before,  
 O yes, I know, I know—  
 Just this at every door:  
 "Good folk, an alms from ye  
 For poor Saint Anthony "  
 Away then, fool, away!  
 To those who fly from sin,  
 O good Saint Anthony,  
 How soon heaven does be in!

#### LAKSHMI

*Goan Fiddler*—O *meri rani, amku deo tora pani.*

*Lakshmi*—I speaking English, saib

*Goan Fiddler*—Very well, my English-speaking  
 daughter, give me then a little water

*Lakshmi*—Why little? drink plenty much All peo-  
 ples liking water of this well

*Goan Fiddler*—Many thanks Never expected to  
 find in this out-of-the-way village a Hindu girl  
 speaking English And nice English too you  
 speak, my daughter

*Lakshmi*—I going to English school in Poona.  
 "Smart thing that goldsmith's daughter," teacher  
 always saying I no girl, saib, I marry

\* O my rani, give me a little water

*Goan Fiddler*—I know it, and have a child too—quite a beauty like its mother. You must let me see it

*Lakshmi*—No, no, I have no got child, saib You make me quite shame Where you going, saib?

*Goan Fiddler*—There's no knowing where I may be going, so large is the sum required to put the chapel in repair But God is great For a handful of this rice people give me a handful of money. Rajah Balaram gave one hundred rupees. The rani is going to have a child, after all God is great, say I.

*Lakshmi*—And what they doing with the rice?

*Goan Fiddler*—Wonders, my daughter, mostly curing sick people

*Lakshmi*—Curing babies' dysentery, saib?

*Goan Fiddler*—O yes, any sickness of anyone

*Lakshmi*—Please give me some, give me some, good saib I giving you one rupee. Baby getting dysentery.

*Goan Fiddler*—But you have no baby, my poor daughter.

*Lakshmi*—I begging pardon thousand times. I afraid you making *jadhoo*,\* and speak lie—begging pardon, good saib.

*Goan Fiddler*—Be not afraid, my good daughter Take this rice, and, should your child be cured, give me what you like when I return this way next month God bless you, my daughter!

*Solus*—Enough to tempt a saint!

So simple too and kind  
 "I no girl, saib, I marry."—  
 Indeed I must not tarry  
 Or look behind.

### SAINT ANTHONY'S RICE

RUPPEES one thousand!—why,  
 I'm quite a millionaire;  
 One thousand in one month!  
 Now soon in good repair  
 The chapel it shall be  
 It is that mission priest—  
 A learned man is he—  
 Has brought me this success,  
 He preached so at the feast  
 Of great Saint Anthony  
 Good luck it chanced to fall  
 The day my work be un—  
 Well done, say I, well done!

A learned man is he,  
 And with his searching eyes  
 Begins to look at me  
 And says "A servant you  
 Of good Saint Anthony?  
 You live with mummies then  
 And visions beautiful,  
 The envy of all men?"—  
 "The hermit saint, mean you?  
 And scourge myself and pray  
 And starve too all the time?  
 I'm only fit, they say,

For spinning yarns in rhyme  
 And how could I behold  
 The visions and not sin?  
 Harmless enough I look,  
 Without, but look within—  
 Good father, pray for me!"

Say I, and slip away  
 To escape his searching eyes,  
 For shrewd is he as wise

Doubtless 'tis due to him  
 My fame has gone abroad,  
 And town and village now  
 Think more and more on God,  
 And folk from every part  
 They run to welcome me.  
 But what is it I live?  
 A handful of this rice  
 What think you I receive?  
 Why, handfuls of bright coin—  
 Rupees, annas or pice  
 What wonders manifold  
 The Saint is working too,  
 If half of what is told  
 Be true!—but here's a proof,  
 See what a widow writes  
 "The Saint has heard my vows,  
 My son has left off drink,  
 In peace again my house.  
 God speed you and your work!"

Think, doubting Thomas, think,  
 These facts your doubts belie—  
 Praise be to God on high!



## THE RECLUSE

AS down the hill at last I went,  
 Not ev'n a growl the tiger gave,  
 Quiet in the sun the cobra lay;  
 Both feared the Master in the slave  
 And harmed me not upon my way.

“Men too shall doubtless fear me now,  
 For, like the Master's forty days,  
 My forty years of close retreat  
 Has not been vain—to God all praise!—  
 And I but mean to wash their feet ”

Thus thinking safe the plains I reached,  
 But, when the homes of men I heared,  
 A mob came shouting loud and shrill,  
 As if a wild beast had appeared,  
 And back they drove me to the hill

Now all night long the tiger howls,  
 As by my cavern mouth he lies,  
 And oft with cries of fear I wake,  
 But, lo, the more by night the cries  
 The more by day the songs I make

## MY WORLD

My world through life had not been wide,  
 But then the views were broad,  
 And I had found it passing fair—  
 Praise be to God!

And now, what though my world seem like  
 A room scarce twelve feet square,  
 One window shows it e'er so wide  
 And not less fair.

But widest, fairest sure to be  
 What time my place of rest  
 Is six feet deep, for then my world  
 Shall be God's breast

DHARNA RIVER  
 (Near Nasik, India)

T      me, friend, to Dharna River,  
 Where it flows by quiet Nanegaon,  
 And leave me there to die,  
 With not a mourner by,  
 But tranquil scenes around me . .

Friend, we've reached the dear dear river,  
 There the cattle home are comin' ,  
 They'll cross the gentle tide,  
 With that small boy for guide,  
 While doves be cooing around me.

Leave me now to watch and listen.  
 Hark the tinklin' s, soft and soothing!  
 One hour mid scenes so blest  
 And I shall be at rest,  
 While Nature watch around me.

THE CO SE

ALL life he had dreamt them—

"Idle dreams!" they said,  
 But the dreams had wounded  
 And his heart had bled. "

Thus a sage, to soothe him,  
 Ofttimes said had he.  
 "What God wills, good neighbour,  
 Best for us will be"—

"Long live thou to guide us!"  
 He had answered calm,  
 Yet his wounds had festered—  
 Such wounds have no balm

Twice the corse I covered,  
 Twice its eyes did close,  
 Each time prayed for mercy—  
 God no mercy shows.

Try again I may not—  
 Makes the blood run cold,  
 Wounds so gaping, hastily,  
 Who can safe behold?

Me the dead man looks at  
 With my father's eyes,  
 I'll go call the vicar—  
 None more worldly-wise!

"Dominus vobiscum!"  
 Come, and have no fear,  
 Be he man or demon,  
 We shall venture near . . .

“What it means I know not,  
 Here I dare not stay,  
 Looks so like my brother  
 When a corse he lay.

“Tell the valiant Bishop,  
 Fights us vassals well—  
 Like to see his Lordship  
 Fight the lord of hell !”

“Benedicat vobis!  
 While ye tarry out  
 I shall see the body—  
 Foolish fears, no doubt.

“Ne’er, in dreams the strangest,  
 Thou’lt see the like to see,  
 Sure some power unearthly  
 Makes him look like me

“Three days lies unburied?  
 None will put his hand?  
 How he died ye know not?  
 Hard to understand

“But the Pope he’ll probe it  
 And a saint send down,  
 From God’s wrath deliver  
 This iniquous town.”

Bishop, vicar, neighbours—  
 Gone is everyone,  
 And my weary vigil  
 Never shall be done!

## POEMS IN PORTUGUESE



## O BALCAO

E despresad',  
 Por despresar o mundo, ,  
 Sou sempre consolado  
 Pelo meu amor profundo  
 Ao balcão.

As saudades que tenho  
 Tantas e tão sa radas,  
 Tivesse eu o en enho  
 Dava em côres douradas  
 O balcão.

O mundo e o céu inteiro  
 Com suas maravilhas, tudo  
 Na infancia vi eu primeiro,  
 Encantado e mudo,  
 Do balcao.

A ente que passava,  
 "Bom dia, baba!" dizia;  
 O muro ni cantava:  
 Tudo eu via e ouvi  
 Do balcao.

Ao solposto os visinhos—  
 Se no saber mui fracos,  
 ondosos como padrinhos—  
 Vinham para dar cavacos  
 No balcao.

Ai, com bôcas fech das  
 Jazem eles, embora

Bem as suas ar alhadas  
Eu ouço finda agora  
No balcão.

De via ens eu voltava,  
E, para dar-me as boas vindas,  
Minha mae me esperava  
Com lagrimas infindas  
No balcão.

Minha noiva sua nora  
Pareceu-lhe uma estrela,  
E correndo veio fóra  
Feliz para recebe-la  
No balcão.

Também a despedida  
Ao meu pae falecido,  
E nunca esquecida,  
Foi do canto querido—  
O balcão.

Contra mim em vão os malvados  
Dirigem suas maldades;  
Ficam sempre frustrados,  
Graças às mil saudades  
Do balcão.

Assi, um va abundo  
Por todos despresado,  
er corro eu pelo mundo  
Pensando consolado  
No balcão.



## O RENDEI O

NU CA viste o reideiro,  
 Sem calça nem casaco, ^  
 Ao subir o coqueiro  
 Agil como um macaco?  
 Que canta madrigaes  
 (Feliz cantôr!)  
 E faz dos palmeiraeas  
 Jardins de amôr?

Pudesse eu subir,  
 Nos palmeiraeas vivia,  
 Cantando todo dia  
 Do meu amôr.

## PARAISO P RDIDO

A' LU dum brando luar  
 Com estos inocentes,  
 Risonhas e contentes,  
 Meninas a brincar!  
 E eu com dôres pun entes  
 A vêr e contemplar  
 As virgens inocentes—  
 Bem longe de serpentes—  
 Felizes a brincar!  
 Ai, com peito ferido  
 A vêr e lamentar  
 eu paraíso perdido!

## A OLEM

N U A flôr no meu jardim  
 E' tão querida para mim  
 Como a flôr abôlem:  
 Seja mais lindo o teu jasmim,  
 Ou mais cheiroso o mo arim—  
 Que a tratam com desdém—  
 Nenhuma flôr no meu jardim  
 E' t o querida para mim  
 Como a minha abôlém—  
 E a única no meu jardim  
 Da inha patria vêm.

## T IST !

A I a inha familia  
 Assim como devia amar—  
 Fui despresado,  
 Ajudei a minha alde  
 Tanto quanto podia ajudar—  
 Fui espancado,  
 Louvei a querida patria  
 Talvez m is que devi louvar—  
 Fui desterrado.  
 Insôfrivel a onia!  
 Tivesse eu ais amado  
 O Amôr Crucificado,  
 De certo n o seria  
 T o desve t rado!

BY THE SAME AUTHOR

A GOAN FIDDLER

With a preface by the late Sir Edmund Gosse

PRICE RUPEES FIFTEEN

"His value as a poet, however, does not depend on the fact that he is the first to interpret a little-known country, but on the freshness, the ecstatic naivety of his feeling for life. We often feel that he achieves spontaneously the attitude which Wordsworth had consciously to cultivate, while many of his verses express, not the ballad tradition but the very spirit at once lyrical and dramatic, familiar and evocative, of the old ballad-maker"—*Times Literary Supplement*

"There is a simplicity and honesty about these poems which touches the heart. It is a unique book which should not be missed by lovers of poetry"—*Bookman*

THE DESTERRADO

PRICE RUPEES FIFTEEN

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BY THE SAME AUTHOR

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With a Portrait of the Author

PRICE RUPEES SIX

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